

What is paratyphoid fever?

Paratyphoid fever is a disease that is caused by the bacterium *Salmonella* Paratyphi. This illness is common in many parts of the world except in industrialized regions, such as the United States, Canada, western Europe, Australia, and Japan. Most cases diagnosed in the United States are actually acquired during travel to other countries.

Who gets paratyphoid fever?

Anyone can get paratyphoid fever, but it occurs more often in people arriving from developing countries where the disease is common.

How is paratyphoid fever spread?

Most people get paratyphoid fever by eating or drinking food or water that has been contaminated by people with the disease, including by those who do not have any symptoms. Raw fruits and vegetables, milk, and shellfish are the types of foods most often associated with illness. Person-to-person spread can also occur. In rare cases, domestic animals might carry or spread *Salmonella* Paratyphi.

What are the symptoms of paratyphoid fever?

Some people who are infected do not develop illness. Others may develop fever, headache, weakness, stomach pains and loss of appetite. Constipation or diarrhea may occur. Some people get “rose spots” on the trunk of the body. Symptoms of paratyphoid fever are similar to typhoid fever, but are typically milder. In some cases, paratyphoid fever can be life threatening, especially if untreated.

How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

The symptoms may appear from 1 day to 10 days after exposure.

How is paratyphoid fever diagnosed?

Laboratory testing of feces (stool) or blood is the most common way to diagnose paratyphoid fever. The bacteria may also be identified in other body fluids.

What is the treatment for paratyphoid fever?

Antibiotics and supportive care are used to treat paratyphoid fever. If your healthcare provider prescribes antibiotics, it is important that you take the medicine exactly as instructed and take all the medicine.

How can paratyphoid fever be prevented?

Spread of paratyphoid fever can be prevented by careful hand washing after each toilet visit and before preparing, serving or eating food. Persons who live in the house or have other close contact

with a person who has paratyphoid fever need to be tested for the disease and may not work in food handling until they have multiple negative tests.

When traveling, particularly to areas where paratyphoid fever is common, it is important to practice safe food and water habits. These include eating food that has been fully cooked, drinking water (and ice) from a safe source, avoiding raw or undercooked food, and avoiding tap or well water (or ice made with tap or well water). For more information, see <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/food-water-safety>.

A vaccine to prevent paratyphoid fever is not available. There is a vaccine to prevent typhoid fever, but it does not protect against paratyphoid fever.

How long can an infected person spread this disease?

The bacteria may be spread to others as long as the bacteria remain in an infected person's stool. Some people with paratyphoid fever may carry the bacteria for weeks to years.

Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?

Most people may return to work or school after they recover from the disease, as long as they carefully wash their hands after using the toilet. However, the health department needs to assess situations where someone with paratyphoid fever could spread the bacteria to others (e.g., infection in a foodhandler, healthcare worker, daycare worker or attendee). These people are not allowed to return to these settings until they have multiple negative tests for the bacteria and the health department approves their return to usual activities.

How can I learn more about paratyphoid fever?

- If you have concerns about paratyphoid fever, contact your healthcare provider.
- Call your local health department. A directory of local health departments is located at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/>
- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2018/infectious-diseases-related-to-travel/typhoid-paratyphoid-fever>

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